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A Clue on Panama

THE unanimous vote of the Panama Legislature not to renew the leases which have permitted the United States to maintain bases in the territory of that Republic for protection of the Canal made the headlines in our papers for a day. Except for a few scattered editorials, the incident then dropped out of the news. It was never explained adequately.

During the week a few interesting hints were dropped in a letter to the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*. Its author is a Panamanian who is teaching Spanish at Washington University in that city. He makes some illuminating points. "We the people of Panama do like the people of the United States. We are willing to give the bases needed for the defense of the Canal, under such conditions that our dignity and pride as an independent nation are well preserved. . . ."

But the writer, Alfredo Canton, finds that such conditions do not now exist and cites the following: "You took to Panama, to the Canal Zone, your racial discrimination. You extended the term 'colored people' not only to the Negroes but to all Panamanians and other Latin Americans." Of the thousands of citizens of the United States working for the Government in the Canal Zone, very few speak Spanish or have Panamanian friends. No Panamanian has ever held a really important position in the Canal Zone and the schools there do not offer Spanish until the seventh grade and then only as an elective. "Communism had nothing to do with this affair. Blame . . . the many teachers . . . who have taken to Panama the democratic philosophy you have in your schools . . ." And the United States is even now trying to put on the pressure through economic sanctions.

This is a heavy series of charges calling for long-term measures. Assuming that we accept the criticism as substantially just, and try honestly to meet it, what of the immediate future? Economic pressure, such as it is, can be relaxed; the United States can austerely keep overtly and interiorly aloof from the Republic of Panama's spring elections; and we can draw up new proposals for the Canal-protecting bases conceived in terms consonant with the most lofty demands of Panama's national dignity. But there appears to be much lost ground to be recovered in the vital areas of tact and mutual respect.

Which of These?

ON JANUARY 11th a new organization "proclaimed its appearance on the national scene" with a manifesto urging "the reaffirmation of the American principle of the separation of Church and State," which it declared "fractured" by the free transportation at public expense of parochial school children, and by the free lunches and free textbooks provided by Federal aid. "Protestants and Other Americans" asked that these and all other aids to sectarian education be abrogated, and that the Presidential representation at the Vatican be discontinued.

Since the U.S. punishes severely any parent who does not comply with its compulsory education laws, it is hardly reasonable to call it unconstitutional for the State to aid the parent to comply with its laws. And free transportation can be censured, if you please, as aid to child, or to parent, but hardly as aid to a non-profit-making school.

Protestants and Others are reviving the arguments brought up in the "Catholic School Bus" case of last year (Everson v. the State of New Jersey). Mr. Everson, of Ewing, N. J., charged that it was unconstitutional of the State of New Jersey to make available to all children transport furnished by the local governments (so long, of course, as the schools to which the children were carried were not operated for profit). He based his objection on the 1st and 14th Amendments:

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the first forbids the establishment of religion; the 14th forbids the State to deprive the citizen of life, liberty or property without due process of law. The issue involved many thousands of children, for fifteen States provide free transportation. The Supreme Court confirmed the State of New Jersey by a five-to-four decision.

The free-books issue was confirmed in 1930 by a *unanimous* decision of the Supreme Court; six States avail themselves of this judgment. In 1946 a federal law was passed granting funds from the national treasury to provide free lunches for both public and private school children. By federal law also, the District of Columbia buses and streetcars are obliged to carry all school children at reduced fares. The State pays for all chaplains, of all denominations, for the Army, Navy and Air Force, out of the taxpayers' money, and under the G.I. Bill of Rights (1946) the Federal Government makes grants for the support of any veteran to the school or college of his choice, whether denominational or not.

The real point at issue has been recognized and emphasized by the State, in the magnificent words of the Supreme Court (Pierce v. Society of Sisters): "The State recognizes that the child is not the mere creature of the State. Those who nurture and direct his destiny have the *right, coupled with the high duty,* to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations."

It is tragic that the great Protestant, freedom-loving tradition so often valiant in the defense of the liberties of America, should have reversed itself so completely as to attack these federal laws, these Supreme Court decisions. It may, indeed, well be argued that an adverse decision in the school-bus case, or the free-books issue, might have been the first step in the establishment by the State of a neutral, a-religious conscience. Which is at least as much an infringement of the 1st or 14th Amendments as would have been the establishment of a Catholic or a Quaker conscience.

It is for every American to judge which of these attitudes he considers to be the more truly American: that of these particular "Protestants and Others" or, for example, that of the Knights of Columbus, whose statement replying to Protestants and Others, runs: "We shall continue to co-operate with all reputable religious groups in support of legislation to give all the citizens of this nation decent housing, good schools, and economic security. Our co-operation will include the promotion of a foreign policy to give citizens of every land the benefits of an international order based on justice and charity."

Importing Farm Laborers

LATEST REPORTS from California on the Di Giorgio Farms Corporation strike point to an intensification of the struggle. Four of the strikers have now been charged with cutting down fruit trees, which is a misdemeanor in the Golden Bear State. Further than that, bail has been set as fantastically high as $15,000 apiece, a figure which constitutes a real hardship if not an outright impossibility for the National Farm Labor Union, the principal adversary of the Associated Farmers of California in this matter. The dozen or more families, members of the Union, who have been occupying about half of the housing accommodations for workers on the Di Giorgio property, have just been evicted by the local sheriff. It is a rugged battle.

Many of the workers involved in the present strike to obtain decent wages, hours and working conditions are Mexicans imported into California under a contract drawn up jointly by the Mexican and United States governments. The texts of such contracts are virtually impossible to obtain, but the report is that new contracts for importing labor both from Mexico and from the West Indies have already been drawn up by the respective governments. It is reported that the terms of the new agreement with Mexico are even poorer than they were last year, and that the contracts for Jamaica, Barbados and the Bahamas are somewhat better in several respects. But when the minimum-wage figure of 37½ cents an hour in these contracts is compared with other American wage scales, the point of the process becomes obvious.

Does the United States need to import foreign workers to prepare and harvest her huge crops? That is certainly the impression found by traveling through various sections of this country. It is so easy to cite temporary and semi-permanent demands for agricultural workers which are simply going begging. But what is being offered in such employment—a living wage, decent housing, an adequate degree of permanence or security? Some men conversant with the agricultural labor market maintain that if a decent minimum of these things went with employment on our farms, there would be no need to import depressed and underpaid labor from abroad. While if the United States were to admit her due share of displaced persons in conjunction with the Marshall Plan, serious shortages of American farm workers would be non-existent.

Under ideal conditions the family-type farm would be predominant in American agriculture. Deprived of that, have we not the right to expect that employees of our big agricultural corporations enjoy the protections of the worker in our urban plants? That is why what is being fought out at Di Giorgio's is of such key importance.

The Economists and the Nation

IT IS quite impossible to follow professional economists into the regions of higher mathemat-

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ics in which they live and disagree and, even when they come out into the daylight and speak clearly and simply to the public, what they say still seems most curiously unconnected with what is possible to do, or even desirable to do. Here are fifty-three economists, most of them university professors, all of them members of the "Economists' National Committee on Monetary Policy," who furnish us this week with a list of eighteen steps to combat inflation. The steps are all defined in simple straight English; you read them and everything is clear; there is no difficulty. The sign boards are all cleanly painted and set up. Only, they point every which way. The steps are there. Only, they go up and down.

Step No. 2 calls for a reduction in taxes, but No. 3 calls for a reduction in the Federal debt. No. 15 urges "that people not buy what they do not need and that they not borrow to buy things they can do without," but No. 17 asks "that interest rates be permitted to find their natural level." And No. 9, bewilderingly, had urged the "cautious use of credit and an increase, where possible, of margins of safety against extensions of credit." No. 11 asks for "reductions in tariffs and other restrictions to trade, domestic and foreign," but No. 16 asks "that the apparent tendency to loan too freely and too much to foreign countries be sharply curbed." And so it goes on and on, naïvely, we think, contradictorily, it is obvious, and, above all, without the faintest effort to relate monetary policy, production, credit and all the rest of it, to the large interests of our foreign or even domestic policy.

Leaving aside the foreign issue which is that, if foreign countries are not helped to survive, point No. 11 will soon be pointless, we call attention to Point No. 1, right at the head of the list. It calls for the "abandonment of all public-work projects except those of an emergency nature." What kind of panic advice is this?

Public-work projects are no more than the rational planning to use the resources of this country for the benefit of the country's citizens. They must not be on-and-off projects. They must be thought of constantly. They must be on the planing boards constantly and presented constantly to the public. Then the business is to see which project has priority over another and set the TVAs, the parks in the cities, the roads, the bridges, the planting of the forests, into execution. The pragmatic American way is to test each project on its merits and determine whether it can best be carried out by the Federal Government, or by the State governments, separately or in groups, or by private initiative.

The importance of public works has not always been appreciated. In the first period of American capitalist expansion the emphasis, naturally, was on capital goods: machines to make machines, plants, factories, durable instruments to produce durable materials, steel for the railways, for the buildings.

Then, between the two wars, because to distribute all that was being produced needed a lot of people, there was a great increase in the service trades. There were a great many people who did not produce anything, but who sold their services for the convenience of the public. They oversold their services, perhaps, and the depression came. Let the economists explain why it came. They are better at explaining after the fact than at preventing disaster.

It was then that public-work projects were thrown into the battle against the suffering of the unemployed. And the trouble is that, because they were used for that purpose, their larger effects are not recognized. Actually, they made life happier not only for those who were employed on the projects but for a great many more Americans, a vast number, whose existence was altered by the execution of the projects themselves. They reclaimed parts of the country which were wasted and in ruins, they saved parts of the country which, without them, would have been wasted and ruined, they put to beneficial and intelligent use natural forces which freed great numbers of Americans from poverty. That process, which started with the depression, was the beginning of a new phase in American life. Americans had exploited the country; now Americans look at the country and are determined to save what can still be saved (it was and is incredibly rich), mend what can be mended, and plan to use it reasonably, using our reason to live in this land without destroying it.

The economists want the Federal Government to spend less money. That is reasonable. But the fact that they selected public works as the first thing to be sacrificed shows a contempt for planning the nation's future which can have come to them only through their curious habit of thinking in their own technique, abstractly, without relating the special problems of money to the necessarily dominant needs and purposes of national policy. Fortunately, the country does not let the economists run it.

Great Lesser Evils

OVER an election year, the United States, it seems, has to get by its political problems on momentum. It is time out for the great game of politics—as distinguished, we are told, from genuine politics. This year there is more friction and the route of our national policy is steeper and more tortuous than at any time since 1860, and one must hope hard there is a lot of momentum.

Not having elections would be much worse. As can be observed these years too easily in too many countries, the liquidation or the power-rigging of elections gives the erstwhile citizen the

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worst, most painful choices—much worse, even, than trying to pick out a candidate, fretting about issues and platforms, gambling on the public-opinion polls, finally coming down to cast a vote for one nominee and against the rest. Where tyrants corrupt or kill the elections, history shows the choices are liable to be: Shall I go to jail? Become displaced? Go underground; into Resistance? Shall I assassinate? Shall I, at end, join the Party?

But with our elections, as run, there arises also a welter of disturbing emotions. They are not, luckily, so obviously and immediately and literally vital, and they are harder to express articulately. There tends to be a kind of indignation, running off into blind anger.

The basic problem is probably a question for long, deep books. Quick observation more readily starts near the surface—at demagogy, in act and reaction. Evidence is widely presented, and the opinion universally expressed that American politicians speak and act during election years through the purest possible motives of demagogy. They are not supposed to say what they think is true, and they are not supposed to do what they really think is most practical and best for the good of the people and State. They are supposed to sacrifice efforts for the common good to catching votes.

The problem of the politician, the candidate, the power seeker is cruelly acute but relatively clear. He should try not to be a liar. He should try not to be a wrecker. His reward for sincerity is not likely, under the present aspect of things, to be quick or sure or overwhelming. Still, there may be some consolations, and in this world too, if he goes in for a long-term career. He can contribute by his virtue to the education of the citizens, and the more educated the voters, the more chance there is of reward for merit. He will avoid association with the consequences of phoney, demagogic policy and establish himself as a man of principles. If the principles he becomes linked with are sound and useful, he may get power later on to put them in effect and to please his ego. In recent history, the freest, most exciting, and from the viewpoint of career, most rewarding coming into power was not effected by demagogic bribes, promises and fictions, but by a platform and speech offering the public "blood, sweat and tears." The circumstances, it is true, were unusual.

The reaction of the political analyst or the expert to demagogy is a tricky problem, not yet sufficiently examined. There is too much evidence of that electoral vice and too wide and firm opinion that it's complete: too much evidence and opinion to pretend that demagogy is not a terribly prevalent problem in 1948. But in another, and opposite sense, also, there is entirely too much signaling of the insincerity and falseness of the words and actions of our politicians. The too cynical analysis of current politics multiplies the triviality and evil which arise from the way men up for office try to get there.

It is quite a problem, how to take demagogy; how to react to it. Our experts would surely serve no proper purpose by taking it all straight, pretending it isn't there, acting as though, for instance, Messrs. Truman and Taft and Dewey and Wallace were in every detail expressing purposes which they believed to be consistent and best for the country and which they expected genuinely to follow through, as spoken, in accomplished deed if only the people would vote for them. Such simplicity among our preceptors would certainly inhibit our political education and maturity and would assure the country the worst kind of post-election bump.

On the other hand, the extraordinary cynicism of the comments and analyses of the Congress opening speeches of President Truman, Senator Taft and the rest of the statesmen does much to reduce politics below the level of useful criticism, and, indeed, of articulate communication. If you interpret every word a candidate utters as meaning not a bit what it says, but rather some temporary bid to some supposed bloc of voters somewhere, you are yourself accepting demagogy and multiplying it by itself. You are not studying politics for how it may affect people and their lives, but to speculate how it clicks up numbers on the totalizator. Doing so, you encourage laymen and office-holders and candidates to think of words and platforms and promises entirely in these partial, dangerous and insulting terms.

It is the voters who are insulted, and who, one way or another, must overcome the demagogy of politicians and political experts or else become a mob tyrannized in the classical formula by power men who are enemies of republican and democratic life.

The effort must be, of course, to force the issue. The motive of the politician in offering you pie on your plate is a matter of considerable interest, but motives make bad and unsubstantial and transitory arguments. It is more useful to examine the pie—at least *as if* the man were really giving it to you and could give it to you and you could eat it. If it has got to be, then it would be more useful to let the candidates worry about Dr. Gallup.

The hodgepodge of the State of the Union Message certainly did not neglect the state of the Democratic Party, but that does not settle the wisdom of the dozens of issues set forth in its numerous paragraphs. The issues which the voters take seriously cannot be passed over by parties and politicians as only campaign demagogy ,however cynical the motives may possibly be all around.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

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The Parish Mission In France

ILLTUD EVANS

FRANCE is a land of perspectives. A pattern in which so often the eye rests on a distant point and finds there the converging unity of mountains, rivers, plains, has inspired, one supposes, even the makers of towns. From the unknown builders of Carcassonne to the Baron Haussmann, a passion for design seems to resolve the immediate detail in the total effect from afar.

Since the Revolution, France has known more than a dozen régimes: republics, empires, kingdoms, and experiments less easily classified of which Vichy was the last. There has been no lack of theories of government, and perhaps the deepest of France's tragedies has been just that. A theory as such can have the fascination—and the instability—of an idea divorced from the hard demands of its fulfilment. But the perspective of a nation's life lies beyond the horizon of politics. France is more than a name in a constitution: her life is more than the sum-total of her laws. Nearly forty years ago Péguy could lament that "when a régime which was organic becomes logical, and after being alive has become historical, it is a régime which has caved in. Today, the Republic is a matter of proof, of demonstration. While it was alive one did not have to prove it."

Whether or not it be true of politics, there is certainly a basic distinction to be made in the spiritual sphere between the accidental and the eternal, between the theory itself and the truth it exists to serve. The Christian revelation, like Péguy's Republic, is not so much something to be proved as a life in which to be incorporated. But it is a total life. It can be rejected; and all of it is rejected. It can be accepted; and all of it matters. In such general terms the idea is commonplace. But in its application it is a revolution. And there are signs that this particular revolution is happening in France today.

France, for so long proud to be called "the eldest daughter of the Church," has become a missionary country. In 1943 the Abbé Godin published his *"France, Pays de Mission?"* He scarcely needed to add a question-mark to its title. This analysis of the religious life of France went beyond a mere answer to the anti-clerical debate which is endemic to French politics. It argued that the best service that the Church could render to France, as indeed to the world, was its very existence, deeply realized and *lived*. It raised, in the terms of our own time, the question of the Church's primary mission. What is the Church for? It might seem late in the day to be asking such a question, but the hope of any Christian revival must be rooted in a return to what is fundamental. Once more it is a matter of perspective: of seeing the particular detail as related to an end which is permanent and universal.

The Church must be defined in terms of its end: it claims to be the Mystical Body of Christ, through which the divine life is made available to men. It is that, or it is nothing. As such it is not an organization for social reform; it is not an academy for the cultured, still less a haven for private piety. Certainly all these elements are present in its life, and the years between the wars saw in France an immense quickening of activity in what one might call the suburbs of the new Jerusalem. Vocational movements such as the *Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne* did much to undo the reproach that there was no Christian consciousness of the problems of industrial society. The annual *Semaines Sociales* brought together Christian economists and sociologists for detailed discussions. The papal condemnation of *Action Française,* moreover, had released Catholics from the cul-de-sac of minority royalism. Lively reviews such as *Esprit* and *Temps Présent* brought the impact of Christian principles to bear on a whole range of problems which had too long been regarded as embarrassing. And the work of such men as Gilson and Maritain gave an intellectual distinction to French Catholicism which it had lacked for generations.

But the basic problem remained—and remains. A Christian élite, however intelligent or energetic, is never a substitute for the common life of the people of God—the people of hidden villages in the Dordogne as well as the militant groups of factory-workers in Lille, the dockers of Marseilles as well as the intellectual coteries of Paris. Today twelve thousand parishes in France are without priests. As you travel south from Paris all seems unchanged: the tables outside the *Café de la Gare,* the ribbon of shuttered houses encircling the parish church, the maize drying from the eaves. But stop; look closer, and you will find that whole tracts of the countryside are dying. The pattern remains, but its substance is lost. The depopulation of the countryside is not merely a sociological factor any more than are the administrative difficulties of the Church a merely ecclesiastical concern. And this is the heart of France; test the heart you must, if you would know the health of the whole body.

The Church's relationship to the human community it exists to serve and to redeem is not just a matter of ecclesiastical rights and duties.

Christianity, if its claims be valid, owes nothing ultimately to the cultural setting in which its life

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is realized. At first sight indeed it seems to owe everything to it: the very fabric of its liturgy, the language it uses, the architecture and music it has inspired, the saints it has engendered—all reflect the age and place it has known. And this is inherent in its double context: that of time no less than that of eternity. The central point of the Incarnation itself is an event in time, from which even the unbeliever must number his days. It happened so, in a particular place, among a chosen people. Through it the loyalties of a people and its traditions receive their deepest meaning. And yet it is a relative meaning. However exactly the carvings of Chartres seem to express the medieval France that gave them being, yet there is no doubt in our minds as to the ultimate horizon they look to.

The recovery of Christian life demands, then, this double allegiance: to a place and time and people, but to all these as reflecting a destiny that is beyond them, beyond mortality.

*

What may all this mean in practice? The place to look for an answer is the parish church, that familiar and indispensable landmark of a village, a land, a whole civilization. The paradox of time and eternity, of a world and its transcendence, is resolved here. An unlikely place it seems, as unnoticed as air and bread and breathing—but as necessary in the economy of human society. Here is the symbol of the Christian impact on the created world: here, radically, is a Christian sociology realized—not at the level of ideas, but at the level of a common life with a common need for release and redemption. The mystery of the divine work in the order of mortal things is expressed in a building, in a place of meeting. These stones proclaim the living stones of a heavenly city, these people are God's people. All mankind, and all created things that serve mankind, are embraced within the shadow of a simple building, rooted in the earth but rising beyond it.

It was such considerations as these that led to the foundation, in 1943, of the *Centre de Pastorat Liturgique*. Unlike many new movements, it set itself to the task of revivifying an existing reality. Instead of imposing an elaborate organization it appealed to the basic fact of the *parish* and its life: the recovery of Christian life in France demanded simply a recognition of the meaning of the parish church in the life of the community. Its title explained its purpose—primarily pastoral, demanding renovation rather than innovation. And its instrument was to be the Liturgy, conceived not as the special concern of a few initiates but rather as the providential means of uniting the life of a community. Up to now movements for liturgical revival—in France as elsewhere—have too often seemed a matter for specialists, concerned with methods of musical interpretation and niceties of ceremonial, antique and far removed from the primary heritage of all the children of God. The Liturgy is the prayer of the Church, available for all and indispensable for the work of sanctification which precedes all else. With its roots deep in the history of the West, with its range extending to the crops in the field as well as to the fundamental moments of human life—baptism, marriage, death—the Liturgy resumes the whole destiny of the Christian people. An understanding of it, a sharing in it; this is nothing new, but neither is it something romantically old—a nostalgic appeal to a world that is dead. The Church is an instrument of reconciliation too, alive to the demands of the place and time it lives in. But fundamentally its mission remains the same because men's needs are at last the same.

The methods of the *Centre de Pastorat Liturgique* are practical, realistic. The Congresses it organizes bring in specialists, theologians, musicians, sociologists—but only vis-à-vis the parish priests who have the task of implementing the suggestions it makes to help forward the common life of the parishes of France. A notable series of publications, clearly written and brilliantly illustrated, has concentrated on the essential task of restoration, of giving back the sense of a community that serves more than itself.

There is no time to speak in detail of this work, but I may refer to the second National Congress held a few weeks ago in Lyons. For four days two thousand priests and several hundred laypeople met to consider the place of Sunday in Christian life. It might seem an unpromising subject, but here again one has to go beyond the familiar idea to rediscover the truth it declares. Sunday, the day of joy, commemorates the cause of our joy. It is the setting of the redemptive work of Christ, and its acceptance must be the condition of any Christian recovery. Too often it is confused with its secondary aspects: obligations, abstention from servile work, the merely natural rest in the cycle of time demanded by man's nature. But the first day of the week is the day of resurrection; its holiness springs from that. And the Sabbath that marked the creative rest of God is transfigured now into the day of the new creation of grace. At Lyons, theologians spoke of the history of Sunday, of its place in Christian tradition, of its application to the circumstances of today. "We ourselves have laicized Sunday," said one speaker, referring to the juridical mood of weekly obligations. And it was a German, Professor Guardini of Tübingen, who reminded the Congress that "to uproot Sunday would be to deprive man of his liberty," for Sunday is eternity touching the circle of time: a day of remembrance as well as a day of antici-

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pation—of joy, therefore, of release, of liberty. There were papers on the special problems of the countryside and of industrial zones, sectional meetings for priests, teachers, youth leaders. But the framework of the whole was the sense of unity, expressed in the liturgical worship each day. For the hundreds of priests from every part of France, isolated and depressed as they must often be, it was a new joy to feel their strength in unity. And this is perhaps the greatest achievement of the *Centre de Pastorat Liturgique.* In four years it has brought together the most disparate people—professors and country priests, liturgical scholars and sociologists—who are at one in their longing for the recovery of Christian life in France, and are at one, too, in their conviction that, like so much else, it begins at home, in the familiar setting, in the providentially "given" circumstances we find.

There are many things happening in France today which seem more important, more urgent. But if the Church be more than an historical survival, life is an element that is never self-contained, and the quickening of that life touches men everywhere.

Religion and Capitalism: 1948

EMERSON HYNES

MAX WEBER started it, and since his lectures at the beginning of the century a score of scholars—among others Sombart, Fanfani, Pirenne, Troltsch—have continued the investigation of the relation between religion and capitalism. Of the works written in English, R. H. Tawney's "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" has attained most importance. A new printing of the book last year (Harcourt. $3.75), the second in America since its original publication in 1926, indicates its continuing appeal. It also gives occasion for reflection on its status: how was it received when it first appeared? Why has it endured? Has it value for contemporary times?

I was not reading anything with much zest except the sport pages when Tawney's work first appeared, but if reviewers reflect the current mind, then "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" was not destined for the extraordinary standing it has attained. I searched the periodical section of the library recently, only to discover that the book was not reviewed at all by a number of standard magazines. It received modest comment in others. (One reviewer dismissed it as "but a mere recapitulation of M. Weber's theory.") The historical journals gave it longer reviews, but dozens of other books, many of whose titles and authors I failed to recognize, got more attention and seemingly were more "vital" and "significant." One of the more extensive reviews was by Dr. Preserved Smith in the *American Historical Review.* After giving due credit for scholarship, he concludes: "Writing not entirely in the historical spirit but with a coefficient of strong moral purpose, he exalts the medieval and deprecates the modern ideal of economic ethics. Like all reformers he attributes to ideas a causative function not belonging to them. The morals of any given society are but the customs of that society . . . they are rationalization of the prevalent habits in terms of current idiom."

This gives us the clue for the unspectacular birth of Tawney's classic. Dr. Smith apparently expressed the majority opinion, since in 1926 the economic interpretation of history was reaching its peak in the United States. Any book which assigned a "causative function" to ideas was academically suspect. To many of us of the younger generation, whose maturation has been dominated by depression, war and the threats of nazism and communism, it seems a little incredible and dreary that our elders in the Higher Learning should have fallen for the sham objectivity of positivism and economic determinism. There is the possibility that we have gone too far in the other direction, ascribing to ideology and psychology powers which they do not possess.

At any rate Tawney's approach is attractive and comprehensible today as it was not twenty years ago. He set out to show that ideas, religious ideas specifically, can exert a powerful influence on economy. He avoids the useless "egg or hen" argument and does not attempt to give priority to either ideological or economic factors. Both of them cause and sustain social activity. Although he has a "strong moral purpose," it is a purpose born of a methodical study of data, economic and theological, and he balances the two factors brilliantly. To this scholarship on a topic which is essential for understanding our society he adds a style that is rich in vivid language and spiced with fine irony. There is every reason to believe that "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" will increase in stature as a classic for students of the social sciences.

In addition to its insight into the past, the work has peculiar importance for future social policy, especially to Christians. Reflection on an age when religion influenced men "to a degree which today is difficult to appreciate" is productive of prudent plans for things to come. In the first section of the book, for instance, Tawney deals with the Church and economic policy in medieval society. He notes the failures, He calls the Church "an immense vested interest" and accuses the popes of regularly employing

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"the international banking houses of the day, with a singular indifference . . . to the morality of their business methods." Medieval society is far from the ideal, but one thing is certain, "economic interests are subordinate to the real business of life, which is salvation." Usury, a term covering the unethical in all buying and selling as well as financing, was universally condemned. Those with capitalistic ambitions might sin, yet as late as the sixteenth century they dared not attack "the assumption that questions of economic conduct belonged to the province of the ecclesiastical jurist. . . . The Spanish dealers on the Antwerp Bourse, a class not morbidly prone to conscientious scruples, were sufficiently deferential to ecclesiastical authority to send their confessor to Paris in order to consult the theologians of the university as to the compatibility of speculative exchange business with the canon law."

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Aware of the naïvete of some of the medieval economic concepts and of the divergence between theory and practice, Mr. Tawney nevertheless concludes, "the problem of moralizing economic life was faced and not abandoned. . . . The significance of its contribution consists . . . in its insistence that society is a spiritual organism . . . that economic activity . . . requires to be controlled and repressed by reference to the moral ends for which it supplies the material means." Why it ultimately failed, for reasons too involved to summarize here, is another lesson. But the original point remains: a historical proof that ideas backed by religious authority can act as a check and balance on economic pursuits. It can be done because it has been done.

This same lesson is established, though with quite a different flavor, by the growth of Puritanism, which Tawney discusses in another section. Calvin was not a defender of social laxity and his Geneva "savored more of a collectivist dictatorship than of individualism." The Puritan theologians had their tracts against economic injustice; but as Tawney insists: "The fundamental question . . . is what type of character it esteems and cultivates." Calvin addressed his theology to those engaged in trade and industry, justified the taking of interest, and viewed the financier "not a pariah but a useful member of society." One's own calling became the exclusive concern and worldly success its symbol. Economic virtue, rigorous application of the duty to work, triumphed as the mark of religious salvation. Continued poverty was seen as a proof of demerit and ultimately it came to this: "A society which reverences the attainment of riches as the supreme felicity will naturally be disposed to regard the poor as damned in the next world, if only to justify itself for making their life a hell in this." In effect Puritanism twisted the ancient Benedictine motto, pray and work, into: to work is to pray. And where the Catholic and early Anglican "had seen society as a mystical body, compact of members varying in order and degree, but dignified by participation in the common life of Christendom," the Puritan society was egocentric, conducive to economic individualism.

Tawney calls the Puritan triumph "the true English Reformation." After 1649, both legislation and the remarkable growth of commerce reflect its victory. Capitalism, while not created by Puritanism, found in it "a tonic which braced its energies and fortified its already vigorous temper." The lesson is the same as in medieval society. Religious ideas can be a powerful force in society, either as a causal or as a sustaining influence. Capitalism achieved a respectability under Puritanism which it did not receive in other Christian bodies. Without this approval it could not have grown and developed as it did. Tawney readily admits that "economic and social changes acted powerfully on religion," yet that in no way diminishes the truth of the reverse.

There is another important lesson for the contemporary Christian in the other two sections of Tawney's book which treat of Lutheranism and the Church of England. Both of them failed to influence the economic activities of their members. All the early Reformers relied heavily on Catholic teaching in economic matters: "there was no intention, among either Lutherans, or Calvinists, or Anglicans, of relaxing the rules of good conscience, which were supposed to control economic transactions and social relations." But Luther, in spite of emotional outbursts against usury, retreated "into the clouds." He hastened the divorce between economics and ethics by cutting away the Church's authority and leaving the practical application of morality in economics to the state. He had faith that if everyone followed the rule to love his neighbor "everything would arrange itself." Of which Tawney asks: "Is emotion really an adequate substitute for reason and rhetoric for law?" His conclusion is decisive: "Lutheranism emptied religion of its social content and society of its soul . . . authority, expelled from the altar, finds a new and securer home upon the throne."

It is much the same with the Church of England. The acquisition of abbey and guild lands by the Crown, and the freedom from the Papacy, were supposed to bring social and religious reform, but the "disillusionment was crushing." Enclosures increased. Exploitation was wholesale. Schools and charities decreased. All the evil aspects of economic individualism flourished. Yet the striking thing about the position of the Anglican divines on these problems "is its continuity with the past." They opposed enclosures

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and usury and maintained that the Church had the primacy in declaring what was allowable or not. But the protest lacked authority. The capitulation to Henry's revolt "almost exactly reversed" the position of Church and State and "the Church became the ecclesiastical department of the State." Though up to the Revolution of 1649 the Crown and Church both tried "to maintain traditional standards of social conduct," the damage was done. When the government came into the hands of the Puritans, the Church was silenced so thoroughly that "In the eighteenth century it is almost superfluous to examine the teachings of the Church of England as to social ethics . . . the very conception of the Church as an independent moral authority has been abandoned." Worse, as Mr. Tawney observes sadly, from then on the Church "was disposed too often to idealize as a virtue that habit of mean subservience to wealth and social position, which . . . is still the characteristic and odious vice of Englishmen."

Religion is not automatically effective in influencing society. Its moral teachings must be realistic, practical and positive. It must have authority and freedom to exercise that authority. It must be vigilant. It cannot confine itself to purely spiritual matters. It must be in the marketplace. It must devise techniques to control and influence changing temporal situations. The religious body must avoid being identified with either the economic or political powers. These are conclusions which flow from Tawney's study.

To close the pages of "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" and simultaneously to close one's mind to thought on the present status of the factors which make up the subject of the book would be an unworthy ending. Tawney gives no indication that he is writing the finale of an era, yet trends in the twentieth century justify this speculation. Broadly, religion and capitalism have been the most dynamic factors in society in the last six centuries. Gothic cathedrals and skyscrapers, religious wars and imperialistic struggles, guilds and factories, Christian charities, schools, hospitals and humanitarian philanthropy, sacred hymns and commercial entertainment, prayerbooks and newspapers—most of the cultural traits of Western civilization have been rooted in one or the other. Throughout, a third factor, the State, has been pressing for domination, but not until the present century has it become overwhelming in influence, capable of producing the totalitarian state. Without supporting a theocracy or condoning the abuses of capitalism, one can be unhappy over our ever growing reliance on, and subservience to, the State. Even in those countries where the State has not taken over completely the functions formerly filled by capitalism and made its political creed a religious dogma, its influence on all the vital processes of life is unparalleled. Of the forces which Mr. Tawney examines so brilliantly, capitalism is all but dead in Europe and religion, while mighty in the hearts of some, is apparently a matter of indifference to the majority.

The trend of the new era is toward the all-inclusive State, but it is not inevitable. As the Catholic Church in medieval times (and in its own way, Puritanism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) supplied religious leadership to give a distinctive feature to society, so it can be done again. A majority backing is not necessary to initiate a radical reform, but zeal for the principle and appropriate techniques are. If it is heartening to note Catholic leadership in developing or promoting such devices as cooperatives, Jocism, the annual family wage, and Christian Democrat political parties, it is also realistic to remember that there is still a good chance that a historian three centuries from now will be writing a study on "Religion and the Rise of the Totalitarian State."

Communications

LETTER FROM A REPLACED PERSON

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Georges Bernanos in his "Letter to the Americans" suggested that President Roosevelt pay little attention to the European "spiritual individualists" who would tell him how to restore our Christian heritage. Bernanos wished that Roosevelt might answer them in this fashion:

"Leaders of Christian opinion of old Europe, we have now been watching you for years, and to speak very frankly, although a large number of you lent more or less support to Hitler's New Order, we regretfully note that you too often mingled with slightly cynical methods, obviously inspired by those of the dictatorships, the spirit of hypocrisy and compromise of which only yesterday you were accusing the democracies. You are only too glad to write us Americans off as frivolous and greedy fellows. We are less mercenary than we seem and you are infinitely more mercenary than you admit. . . ."

Perhaps reading Bernanos's whole letter might clear up Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's dilemma. It would enlighten the American camp followers of the old Pretender, Francis Stuart Campbell.

The Reverend JOHN P. MONAGHAN.
Association of Catholic Trade Unionists.

Sunnyside, Wash.

TO the Editors: A great deal could be said against the general and individual tendencies of the latest of Campbell-Leddihn's, which is as adolescent as most of its predecessors, from his first novel to his "Menace of the Herd." All this does not put him into a class with Leon Bloy (whose invective and rancor he shares) or Georges Bernanos (whose passion he emulates).

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But neither of them would have talked of Saint Augustine's death at the hand of any vandal. The great man died in bed, peacefully. Mr. Campbell-Leddihn is so full of information—how could he possibly make this mistake unless he really suffered physically and metaphysically. To him belong our honest sympathies.

The Reverend H. A. REINHOLD.

Bethlehem, Conn.

TO the Editors: I wish to thank you for printing Mr. Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's brilliant and sensitive article. I must also beg leave to disagree with you on your comments.

Evidently Mr. von Kuehnelt-Leddihn is not, as you insist, angry and despairing. He sounds remarkably happy and realistically so. His despair (if you will have it so) seems a logical analysis of the existing situation and he even points out, and quite rightly, that with a return to faith and reason all will be well. This, and the Cross, it seems to me, is what Mr. von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, in his sanity, is pointing out as the "only way."

The disagreements with this article added by the editors would seem quibbles that in no way affect its central arguments. The European situation is at that extreme where there is *no* political solution. But, for Christians, this is not hopeless. I am only sorry you did not see fit to print the article without comments.

DORA STONE.

Caldwell, Idaho.

TO the Editors: I think Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's "Letter From a Replaced Person," which appeared in your issue of January 2nd, by far the finest thing that I have ever read in THE COMMONWEAL—which I have been reading for many years. J. H. GIPSON.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: You have the courage to publish Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's article, and then you turn around and destroy it by your comments. That's what you have done—destroyed—because you know as well as I do that we Americans seize greedily upon any soothing argument that will allow us to continue undisturbed in our comfortable thoughts. Three months after the end of the war it was difficult in social gatherings in this city to speak of what had happened to people in Europe. And a few hundred miles west of New York people disbelieved the story of the mass murders in the concentration camps and elsewhere. They disbelieved because they wanted to disbelieve. They wanted to disbelieve because they "could not take it," any more than they could take the bad man getting his mounties or Floyd Murgatroyd evicting the poor widow with a whip. We cannot take it. Any more than we can take corpses. And here comes Von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, and what he has to say of Austria is true of all Europe which was under the German heel. His article may be full of passion and bitterness, but it is extraordinarily healthy because Europe does not kid itself. And in addition he pays us the compliment of speaking to us as adults and talks of the American defeat. That is put bluntly without *nuances*. But it is because everything in Europe now is "deadly serious." Anyone who has been there and has lived for a few months the life of the people will tell you so, and for such a one your own comments ring indeed like those from another planet.

Now it may be necessary and excellent that someone, that we, are still on another planet and can bring the balanced solace of our dispassionate thinking to the torn, scorched, naked human hearts and minds of Europe. If so, it seems to me that we have something other to do than just blindfold and defend ourselves. Von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, like the people of Europe, has encountered the Cross, overwhelmingly, in a manner so complete that it is not only beyond speech but beyond imagining. And it is still going on. Yet here we are, untouched, like children who are apart from the horrible agony which their parents are enduring. Children. That's what Europe calls us. All right. As such we certainly have a message for our European parents. It cannot be to justify ourselves even if in the end we did not save them. It cannot be to argue with them. Our message is the children's message—the Resurrection. Our optimism, our *légèreté* (quite unbelievable sometimes) is not only founded, as Mr. Leddihn says, on the illusion of life without death, the Resurrection without the Cross, an obvious absurdity, but our childish faith is also the child's instinctive and sure apprehension of the final defeat of Satan by God. To our European parents dragging the Cross (they cannot carry it any more) we are, and should continue to be, the ever-loving children *humbly* standing in the God-given light of the Resurrection. Whenever we have been just that—what we really are—not only have we been understood but we have been taken to their hearts, and the Cross, their Cross, has been lifted.

The beautiful mercilessness of Kuehnelt-Leddihn's article should have inspired but two editorial comments: a technical one to the effect that the opinions expressed were solely those of the author; a human, Catholic, American one—Christ is risen.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

The Stage & Screen

Skipper Next to God

EVERY SO OFTEN I think it is possible for the most dogged critic to draw a blank, and I had better confess at once that Jan De Hartog's present piece —Experimental Theatre's second production of the season—left me tepid, if not cold. And this in spite of the fact that the business was serious, extremely well acted, and perfectly set by Boris Aronson. In short, an arresting job on every score. Perhaps it will be safest to put my diffidence down to too much weather. Mr. De Hartog's scheme reveals the skipper of a Dutch transport, a man who has in maturity been struck by Christianity, and whose wrestle with his own conscience and with the consciences of others constitutes the play. His prob-

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lem is to find a port to accept his cargo of Jewish refugees, whose visas to a South American port have been denied by the authorities. After innumerable attempts to land these people, legally or illegally, along our coast, the man's final solution is to scuttle his ship in the midst of a regatta, knowing that all on board will be picked up by the racing yachts and that public opinion in the U.S. will in all probability mitigate the fate of his passengers. Logically of course the business is fairly limping and structurally the play suffers from a lack of balance. Most of the vital scenes we hear about rather than see and as there are so many subtle bureaucratic technicalities to the problem, it would have been wiser to present them in operation, instead of talk. On the other hand, the author has certainly a grasp of character, all of his minor people are alive and round. His major people are his mistake. His Christian is a consistent protester, a half-conscious man; his Jew is a long wail, heard mainly from the hold. This is not real. I do not say that the incident around which the play revolves may not have happened, that it may not be fact. But it is not real in the sense that a problem play in the theater must be real—as a conscious, deliberate assessment of history. Without this consciousness, all is sentimental rather than tragic: as if one were to say that every Negro were helplessly ignorant, every Jew helplessly palsied, every working Christian a friendless quoting man. I do not think that such sentimentality adds up either to life or to art, and probably that is why I sat through this play in a state of stupor. But it was a not ungrateful stupor and the work of the actors, especially of Joseph Anthony, John Becher and Eugene Stuckmann certainly provoked my willing admiration. If I think Lee Strasberg's direction and John Garfield's powerful playing of the hero stressed all the intrinsic weakness and plausibility of the script, that will be of course arguable ground. But the point of E.T. is surely to stimulate argument and to create new terms, force new definitions. So far this season, I should say it has been 100 percent successful. (*at the Maxine Elliott*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

My Wife, Poor Wretch

TWO VERY BRIGHT and shining new movies, that positively glitter for their production values, seem to come to the same conclusion, although by quite different methods: that men are putty in the hands of the women who make or break them. In *"The Paradine Case,"* Gregory Peck portrays a lawyer who falls hard for his beautiful client, who has been charged with murdering her blind husband. Practically everyone in the movie, except Peck, who is supposed to be the smartest lawyer in his field, realizes how evil this woman is. As portrayed by Valli, a stunning newcomer from Italy, she is both evil and fascinating. But it is the English actress, Ann Todd, who gives the big performance in this picture. As Peck's devoted and hurt wife, Miss Todd brings to this rôle a depth and understanding which surpass any of the film's most obvious assets.

"The Paradine Case" is an unusual film in that it actually tells two stories: the murder mystery involving Valli and her husband's valet (played effectively by a very handsome Frenchman, Louis Jordan), and the incipient infidelity involving Peck, Todd and a large group of good actors portraying England's upper crust. The two stories are nicely integrated and the whole will hold your interest in spite of the fact that David O. Selznick, who gave this film such a slick production, also wrote its script, which is much too wordy and much too long. Alfred Hitchcock, that master of suspense, has directed it well, particularly in the development of characterization. He establishes the characters so well that during the later courtroom scene, he merely moves the camera after each witness makes a revealing statement; and we feel the impact of this new development in the plot because we know how each interested person should react. Effectively contrasted with the Peck-Todd angle is another married pair whose life together is a neurotic jangling of discord. In somewhat hammed-up performances, Charles Laughton and Ethel Barrymore portray the sensuous judge and his intimidated wife. Their unhappy marriage makes us pull all the harder for Peck when he falls under the sway of Valli. Good performances in this extraordinary cast are also turned in by Charles Coburn, Joan Tetzel and Leo G. Carroll. It is to Hitchcock's credit, however, that the story (based on Robert Hichen's novel) and the cast are able to make a unified whole in spite of the verbose script. Perhaps it is the very weakness of men and their irritating assurance, especially of husbands, that hold our interest in this lengthy study of relationships.

When Oscar Wilde makes a point, he makes it quickly and wittily. In *"An Ideal Husband"* Wilde puts over several points very well. His plot won't win any prizes for depth, but the movie filmed from this play moves along nicely with one brilliant scene after the other. Producer-director Alexander Korda illustrates effectively how a picture should be made from a stage play with emphasis on cinema technique. Never does Korda let the film get bogged down with static dialogue, lovely technicolor or situations that were designed for the stage. The whole flows as a movie should, and never once trips over the elaborate settings (by Vincent Korda) and beautiful costumes (by Cecil Beaton). The Wilde lines, the impressive cast and the flossy decorations work together to give you an hour and a half's entertainment. I found Paulette Goddard a little brassy as the scheming Mrs. Cheveley, but perhaps the rôle demands this crass tone.

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In any case, when she comes to Lord Goring's house wearing an orchid-colored evening gown and a brilliant cape of gold, you fully understand why she turns all men's heads. The rest of the cast is practically perfect; Michael Wilding as the debonair Goring; Diana Wynward as the lady who has put her husband on the pedestal, and Hugh Williams as the stuffy man who naturally doesn't deserve this lofty position; Glynis Johns as the bright girl who loves Goring and has to work rather hard to land him; and Aubrey Smith, Constance Collier and many others in supporting rôles that add to the wit and background of this amusing movie. It is seldom that a period piece is as well done in the movies as "An Ideal Husband." Even Wilde would approve of its rustling silkēn tone that further brightens his flippant epigrams. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Who Killed the Drama?

VIVIAN MERCIER

WHILE READING "A History of Modern Drama," edited by Barrett H. Clark and George Freedley,* I kept wondering just where the modern drama went wrong. Some people, of course, argue that it was wrong from the start and blame Ibsen for robbing the theater of imagination and romance, in exchange for which he offered only a soulless realism. I don't believe, however, that anyone who really knows Ibsen's work would subscribe to such a theory even for a moment. The plays he is most frequently remembered by—"A Doll's House" and "Ghosts"—are representative of only a brief phase in his long career as a dramatist. "Peer Gynt" (1867), "The Lady from the Sea" (1888) and "When We Dead Awaken" (1899), are just three of the plays from widely separated periods of Ibsen's development to which the label "realist" cannot be applied.

Alrik Gustafson, who writes the opening chapter of this history—on the drama of the Scandinavian countries—knows his subject too well to make such a mistake about Ibsen. He points out that the latter embarked on the writing of his best-known "problem plays" only after Bjornson's example had shown him something of the great possibilities of this genre. Ibsen was preoccupied with plays of this type for a decade at most—"Pillars of Society," the first of the group, appearing in 1877, and "The Wild Duck" ending the series in 1884. Allowing two years for the composition of "Pillars," we get a total of nine years; even so, a play so permeated with symbolism as is "The Wild Duck" cannot be classified as merely realist or "socially conscious."

The truth is that Ibsen has been very badly served by his commentators and imitators; the latter fastening only on that part of his work which is easiest to imitate. Most Ibsen worshippers have been only one degree less crass than the critics who blew their tops when "Ghosts" was first produced. Shaw played Ibsen the scurviest trick of all by trying, in "The Quintessence of Ibsenism," to make a Fabian Socialist of him. Ibsen was too many-sided to fit any one-track theory of either society or art. Moreover, Shaw had sense enough not to imitate the Ibsen he had invented—or at least not after the mediocre "Widowers' Houses" and that appallingly dull play "The Philanderer." Shaw's true models are Molière, the English comic dramatists from Wycherley to Wilde, the librettists of Italian grand opera, and such works as Diderot's "Le Neveu de Rameau," in which the French Enlightenment thought it was reviving the Platonic dialogue, but was actually creating a new art form, the "imaginary conversation." What *is* Shaw's most recent play "In Good King Charles's Golden Days," if not an imaginary conversation, much louder and funnier than any of Landor's? The same is true of all Shaw's other "historical" plays, from "The Man of Destiny" to "Saint Joan" and "Geneva."

A lot more could be said about Ibsen and Shaw, but I must get on with my search for the guilty ones who brought the drama to its present state of stagnation. We already have one group of culprits: those who imitated only Ibsen's realist, social problem side, without having any of his passionate interest in the infinite variety of human character, or any of his talent for focusing half a dozen aspects of a problem through a single symbol. A good example of the type of dramatist I have in mind is John Galsworthy. He was an honest, competent craftsman with a fully awakened social conscience, and in his novels he showed a decided gift for characterization, but most of his plays are mere contrivances, as trickily plotted as so many detective stories. It's not fair, though, to single out "honest John" thus, for there is a dramatist like him (only not so good) lurking under every flat stone in all the English-speaking countries, and I venture to predict that the present Broadway season will uncover at least one new playwright of this type.

Realism and the problem play are not absolutely inseparable, of course, but to me Realism seems pretty suspect, whatever company it keeps. You have to be an Ibsen or a Chekhov or a Synge to handle the realist bag of tricks properly—in others words, you have to be *more* than just a realist.

One mustn't forget though, that there is another type of modern problem play—the Expressionist one. According to Alrik Gustafson, Strindberg is the father of Expressionism, but it would not be fair to blame Strindberg for his disciples' excesses, any more than we should blame Ibsen for what others have done with Realism.

I forget who first compared the method of the Expressionist play to that of the Morality play or of Allegory; at any rate, it is a very just comparison. The dramatic conflict is no longer between characters, in the sense of individual personalities, but between abstract forces. An actor does not represent each of the seven deadly sins, as would happen in a Morality, but you are very likely to have instead one actor representing Justice, another Art, another Capital, another Labor, and so on. In many realist problem plays, of course, the same thing is done; but the author there *does* have to clothe his abstraction in something remotely like a human personality.

* Appleton-Century. $7.00

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No such obligation rests upon the Expressionist playwright. Karel Čapek's "Insect Comedy," where human vices and virtues are attributed to insects, supplies an extreme example. Mr. and Mrs. Dung-Beetle, for instance, typify Avarice.

Another point about Expressionism: the opposing forces don't even have to be individual people, they can be represented by groups. Again the "Insect Comedy" supplies an example—the war between the two nations of ants. In a professional production of this play that I saw in Ireland, the marching armies of Red Ants and Black Ants were not professional actors at all, but well drilled Boy Scouts! In our modern theater, the director has become so important that perhaps many Expressionist plays won production only because they required no trained actors or actresses—simply a capable director.

Expressionism thus completed the degradation of the actor's art that Realism had begun. Yeats somewhere says that deep emotion in realist plays of the pseudo-Ibsen variety is usually conveyed by the actor's gazing, tight-lipped and silent, into the fireplace—that being the way well-bred people behave in real life. Yeats turned in disgust to plays about peasants or legendary figures, since neither peasants nor heroes were forced by convention to remain tongue-tied in a crisis. At least, though, the actor gazing into the fireplace had to be an *actor,* not a Boy Scout. Expressionism of Čapek's kind was a true child of the mass production era: every performer a standardized, replaceable part.

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And yet, having said all this, when I turn to the book's last chapter—on the drama of the United States, by Barrett H. Clark—I am forced to make something of a recantation. One has to agree with Mr. Clark when he says, in substance, that the American drama since 1920 is better than any previous American drama for two reasons: first, because "the playwright seems intent upon persuading us to look on his work as some kind of reflection of life as we know it," and second, because every American dramatist since 1920 has taken some liberties with his medium, usually influenced by Expressionism.

Whatever one's theoretical objections to the influences at work in it, in practice the American theater between 1920 and about 1940 was the liveliest in the world. It will be one of the regrets of my life that I did not reach this country till 1946, when the theater was already moribund. Certain plays that reached us on the other side remain unforgettable: Irwin Shaw's "Bury the Dead," Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" and "The Skin of Our Teeth," Elmer Rice's "The Adding Machine," William Saroyan's "The Time of Your Life," Robert Ardrey's "Thunder Rock." Even such mechanical contrivances as "The Man Who Came to Dinner" and "Arsenic and Old Lace," representing the decadence of the American theater, charmed us by their unfamiliar and ruthless vitality. One name I have not mentioned; in the period under review America had many excellent plays, but only one great dramatist, Eugene O'Neill. Of his plays that I have seen, I remember best "The Emperor Jones" and "Mourning Becomes Electra." The latter may be melodrama rather than tragedy, but it is certainly a play that one doesn't just see; one *lives* it.

When one mentions O'Neill in the same breath with Ibsen, or Chekhov, or Shaw, or Synge, the American's limitations are at once apparent. He can hammer his audience down and leave them limp and shaking, but I don't think he can ever lift them up and carry them away into a new dimension, as Ibsen does in "The Lady from the Sea," or Synge in the last act of "Deirdre of the Sorrows," or Chekhov when Nina returns in "The Sea Gull," or Shaw in the Epilogue to "Saint Joan."

I *had* thought of concluding this review with an attempt to define the present state of the American theater; I decided not to, because it has been done so well already by, for example, Eric Bentley in *Harper's.* One comment I might make, however. The three Broadway plays I most enjoyed last season were none of them American. This season I most want to see "Antony and Cleopatra," "Medea," and "Man and Superman." "A Streetcar Named Desire" comes a poor fourth on my list.

I think the artistic forces, as opposed to the economic ones, responsible for the American theater's recent decline, are precisely those that earlier brought about its heyday, to wit, Realism and Expressionism. Since Western drama finally became distinct from religious ritual, in or around the sixteenth century, its essential raw material has been the infinite permutations and combinations of human character. Whenever a dramatic style or "ism" outlives its usefulness, dramatists have to fall back once more on this raw material—that and their own imaginations. The three essentials which the work of any new American playwright must have, if he wishes to resurrect his country's theater, are character, character, and again character.

Boswell's Boswell

ANNE FREMANTLE

ENGLAND, which first invented that quintessence of perfection, the gentleman's gentleman, has now improved upon her own design, and, in Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis, has produced the biographer's biographer. And so good, indeed, is Mr. Lewis's Life of James Boswell,* that it deserves to become, in its turn, a classic, to set beside its great exemplar, and beside Roper's "Household of Sir Thomas More," or Morley's "Gladstone," or David Cecil's account of the poet Cowper, "The Stricken Deer."

Mr. Lewis shows us Boswell, throughout his fifty-five years of crowded life, vacillating, almost ricocheting, between the influence of Dr. Samuel Johnson, his good angel, and of John Wilkes, of the Hell-Fire Club, his evil genius. Perhaps nothing Boswell himself ever wrote is as dramatic as his account of the one meeting between his so greatly contrasted, twin presiding deities. Boswell first describes all the finesse he had to use to bring this

* *The Hooded Hawk.* D. B. Wyndham Lewis. Longmans. $4.00.

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meeting about. He knew that Dr. Johnson might suspect an invitation from him, and so persuaded a mutual friend, the bookseller Dilly, to stage the dinner. Then, in order to persuade Johnson to accept the invitation, he suggested to him that he would *not* consent to meet Wilkes. Johnson, falling heavily into the trap, declared huffily that he "could meet any company whatever, occasionally." But when the great evening came, and Boswell called to accompany the Doctor to his rendezvous, he found him "buffeting his books, covered with dust," having told Mrs. Williams, the old blind lady with whom he lodged, that he would be home for dinner. So Boswell had first to coax Mrs. Williams into letting the Doctor go. No wonder that when he finally got his quarry "fairly seated in a hackney coach with me," Boswell notes, "that I exulted as much as a fortune-hunter who has got an heiress into a post-chaise with him to set out for Gretna Green."

After the dinner itself had passed off agreeably enough, both men united in chaffing Boswell. "I turned him loose at Lichfield," said Dr. Johnson, "for you know he lived among savages in Scotland, and among rakes in London." "Except," countered Wilkes, "when he is with grave, sober, decent people, like you and me." Johnson (smiling) "And we ashamed of him." This is a charming picture, mellow, warm, human and civilized; a sheltered contrast to the Hogarthian scenes, many of which Mr. Lewis includes, amongst which far more of Mr. Boswell's life was spent than in the safe security of Dr. Johnson's Christian ambiance. Boswell's motto was *"Vraye Foy"* and his crest, a hooded hawk. Mr. Lewis sees the heraldic emblem as explaining, perhaps, in part, Boswell's itching after Grace. Indeed, his life-long and abiding interest in the "old religion," in the midst of Scottish dissent at home, and eighteenth century agnosticism in his beloved London, is, to say the least of it, a curious trait in this friend of Voltaire, Rousseau, Wilkes and Hume. Throughout his life, Mr. Lewis suggests, Boswell was "perpetually attempting to soar into the empyrean, clogged by his tirings, and perpetually falling to earth again, baffled; and perpetually in his own imagination he is the passage-hawk in yarak, free of the air, and plumed to the very point." As Mathias Claudius has it

Der Adler besuchet die Erde,
doch saeumt nicht, schuttelt vom Flugel den
Staub, und kehret zur Sonne zurueck . . .

Mr. Lewis sets out determined to draw blood. He insists on being controversial, and his defense of Boswell is to attack his traducers, especially Macaulay, that "Himmler of the Whigs" as he calls him. But he does not attempt to whitewash his hero. Boswell, he agrees, was a sad drunk. But no sot. "The shambling wretch . . . slithering down the slope to boozy dissolution from 1777 onwards, is actually the Boswell to whom Johnson says contentedly at this very period, "'I don't care though I sit all night with you.'" And the wencher who asked Rousseau, "I would like to have thirty women. Could I not satisfy that desire?" had more in his head than a phallus. Mr. Lewis notes the enormous influence of Rousseau, the "wild philosopher" on Boswell (how astonishingly revealing of both men the "Dialogue" is) and their similar temperaments: both must kiss and tell, and moralize as well.

Dr. Johnson was certainly born out of his time. His gentle, chaste, ponderous goodness was better suited to the Middle Ages than to the libertine England of the Georges. He would have made a saintly outsize abbot. He had a real sense of *eidos,* and his terror of death, of which he never was the least ashamed, sprang uniquely from his "clearer view of infinite purity." And yet, as Mr. Lewis notes, he is not read at all today: indeed he is so entirely outmoded, that he is remembered only by Boswell's devotion "the one-time Dictator of English letters lives today only by his disciple's brilliance." And one might add, piety.

Before surveying Boswell's dappled career, Mr. Lewis advises us to ask, just why did Dr. Johnson take so kindly to this rather uncouth young Scot, instead of to any other of the respectful young men who surrounded him? And the answer is that Boswell "was the perfect companion; attentive, vivacious, grateful for favors, impervious to noise and bullyings."

Mr. Lewis begins his study with a very fine account of Boswell's death-bed; then immediately goes on to discuss his brief attack, as a young man, of "Roman fever." We have, indeed, Boswell's own confession to Rousseau that "I . . . turned Roman Catholic and had intended to hide myself in a convent in France," but Mr. Lewis does not think he ever actually took so extreme a step. The deterrents were, as in his case was amply proven, too great. But Boswell's father was seriously alarmed, and sent his son to London to save him from Papistical notions, and tried to make an Anglican of him. He partly succeeded, though Rousseau was later to take a dim view of the young man's faith, as he did of Saint Paul, "who I think is partly responsible for muddling your head. He would have been an Anglican clergyman," said Jean-Jacques.

Boswell was strangely diverse, a very chameleon of a character. The good Dr. Johnson knew nothing (or pretended he knew nothing) of his young friend's most unglamorous private life, cluttered with bawds and drabs, and dosed with mercury ("bless me, what a risque"). Besides Dr. Johnson, women and wine, Boswell had other, and as lasting, devotions: for Paoli, which won him the nickname "Corsica Boswell"; for Voltaire and Rousseau; for Garrick and Reynolds; for Wilkes, and, oddest and staidest, for Temple, the sedate clergyman to whom, in a positive spate of letters, Boswell "revealed all." And he was surprisingly steady in his (masculine) friendships; and, for all his self-deceptions, "never attempts to justify his own offences against Christian morals." As Mr. Lewis pertinently queries: "Could Luther say as much?"

Poor Mr. Boswell's many disappointments, at the Bar, at the hands of the British electorate, and at the hands of the horridly sadistic Lowther, indeed, throughout his public life generally, are most sympathetically recounted. He seems to have had a "hunch" that he need not worry himself about his literary fame; he never seems to have

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worked himself up about it as he did about his more evanescent hopes. Even without having browsed upon the Isham papers, what emerges from any study of Boswell is that here we have a modern man, exquisitely concerned with his own sensibility. No longer does he relate himself, as did the Elizabethans, to Nature; or, as their forbears did, to God. Nor yet is he concerned about humanity, although, as he admitted to Rousseau, "I have even on many occasions, been very affable, I have talked freely with the tenants." Rousseau: "Yes, you forgot yourself, and became a man." Boswell: "But I was sorry for it afterwards. I used to think I have lowered myself." Rousseau: "Ha! Ha! Ha!"—but fascinated, enchanted, gloating, over what made him, James Boswell, tick. Nowhere is this better demonstrated than in the "Dialogue with Rousseau." "I held under my arm a hat with a soldid gold lace, at least with the air of being soldid. I had a free air and spoke well, and when M. Rousseau said what touched me more than ordinary, I seized his hand, I thumped him on the shoulder. I was without restraint."

As Goethe was the last Renaissance man, so Boswell was one of the earliest moderns. He is near us indeed, with his snivelling remorse, that is never repentance, with his sentimentality, that never flames into charity, with his squirrel restlessness, and his infinite distaste for his own company; with his manic depressions and his orgiastic high-tides.

Louis Kronenberger has done a very skilful job in his "The Portable Johnson and Boswell" (Viking. $2.00), which contains a cross-section of Boswell's "Life," ample selections from the "Tour of the Hebrides," and from the "Dialogue with Rousseau": selections also from Mrs. Thrale's anecdotes and from Fanny Burney's diary. Johnson's lives of Savage and Pope are also included, complete, and the whole of the correspondence about Mrs. Thrale's marriage, as well as other letters: the whole of the Shakespeare preface, and quite enough poems. Mr. Lewis says his book is "but a sign-post to Boswell's Life of Johnson" and, for a start, no reader, having completed his perusal of "The Hooded Hawk" could do better than rush out to the nearest bookstore and buy the "Portable Johnson and Boswell." Only it is very likely he will ask for "Boswell and Johnson."

More Books of the Week

The Pearl. John Steinbeck. Viking. $2.00.

"NOW KINO'S people had sung of everything that happened or existed. They had made songs to the fishes, to the sea in anger and to the sea in calm, to the light and the dark and the sun and the moon, and the songs were all in Kino and in his people—every song that had ever been made, even the ones forgotten. And as he filled his basket the song was in Kino, and the beat of the song was his pounding heart as it ate the oxygen from his held breath, and the melody of the song was the gray-green water and the little scuttling animals and the clouds of fish that flitted by and were gone. But in the song there was a secret little inner song, hardly perceptible, but always there, sweet and secret and clinging, almost hiding in the counter-melody, and this was the Song of the Pearl That Might Be, for every shell thrown in the basket might contain a pearl."

The tale is of a Mexican diver who found a pearl of great size and of how it brought him calamity and perhaps wisdom. It is a legend of simple people, a piece of folk music which Steinbeck transformed into an art song.

Form is the most important thing about him (Steinbeck). It is at its best in this work. The story moves with simplicity and direction, with ease and polish. Because of the writing there is a remoteness, a pearl-like quality in it. It comes between the characters and the reader. Kino and Juana, his wife, are figures on a tapestry, fitting into a pattern. In this tale it is suitable. One wishes sometimes that the people in Steinbeck could take over as people. So often they are Steinback's people before they are people, and then they lack complete authority. But in this tale it is fitting.

And besides his form what else is there in Steinbeck. And why is there not more? There is much else in him. He is a man of many arts and causes, and somehow there is no whole greater than these parts. But he does write well. Maybe too well. This is a very good story; not a great story.

The drawings by Orozco are dramatic but not very good. More interesting are Peggy Worthington's illustrations of Viking's recent edition of "Tortilla Flat."

ANNE HUNTER.

Literary Sources of Art History. Edited by Elizabeth Gilmore Holt. Princeton. $6.00.

ALL ART historians recognize the incalculable value for their subject of literary source material. For this material not only vividly reveals the personalities and ideas of artists; it illumines the culture in which they created. While the most famous sources are well known, many have been heretofore difficult of access, many more unavailable in English. These serious handicaps to the study and appreciation of art are in great part eliminated by Mrs. Holt's masterful volume which offers to the student of art history the largest and most fascinating collection of literary sources yet published.

Beginning with the famous statement by Raul Glaber of 1003 concerning contemporary church building and concluding with Goethe's essay of 1772 on German architecture, this volume includes an array of material remarkable for its scope and variety. For example: even the portion devoted to the Middle Ages, which is naturally the shortest, presents a highly enlightening picture of artistic personalities, interests and aims. In addition to long excerpts from the more familiar writings of the Abbot Suger and Cennino Cennini, we find passages from Leo of Ostia, Theophilus, St. Bernard, Gervase of Canterbury, Villard de Honnecourt, William Durand; and we learn from letters about the building of Chartres and from a document about the procession at the completion of Duccio's "Majesty." Better than anywhere else in English, this section of the book illustrates the major esthetic concern of medieval writers: namely, an almost unbelievable delight in an abundance, richness and brilliance of valuable materials.

The types of sources included in this volume are notably diverse. Of greatest length are the writings upon

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art theory: such works as "On Painting" and "On Architecture," by Alberti, the "Treatise on the Art of Painting," by Lomazzo, "The Principles of Painting," by Roger de Piles, and excerpts from Lessing's "Laocoon." The historical documents chosen are themselves varied: for example, the contracts of Michelangelo for his Pietà and David, a portion of the "Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent" and Veronese's "Trial Before the Holy Tribunal." Then there are lives of artists (e.g., Baldinucci's of Bernini), letters (e.g. of Rubens and Rembrandt), commentaries and poems. In the twenty-five pages devoted to the writings of Dürer, we find an "Outline of a General Treatise on Painting," excerpts from "Four Books on Human Proportion," three Letters, and parts of "The Travel Diary on the Trip to the Netherlands."

The diversity of interest and significance implicit in such varied material produces great differences in the length of the passages quoted. Each reader will probably feel that some selections are too short, others too long; thus two pages for Vasari, even though the "Lives" are easy of access, seem skimpy, while twenty for Lord Shaftesbury seem unduly generous. This type of criticism, which is neatly anticipated by Mrs. Holt in her preface, is inevitable when one realizes the difficulty in selecting this quantity and diversity of material. And surely the selections are on the whole admirable. One is particularly grateful for the fulness with which most of the important writers are represented. For example, Palladio, who is not quoted at all in "Arists on Art," a useful work recently compiled by Goldwater and Treves, is given thirteen pages in the present volume.

Excellent accounts of the authors are prefixed to their writings and illuminate the main body of the material in a number of ways. A two-page introduction to Piero della Francesca's "Of the Perspective of Painting," for example, summarizes Piero's life, comments upon the nature of his treatise, and discusses the general character and importance of Renaissance and post-Renaissance views on perspective. The notes, which are placed at the bottom of the pages and which are scholarly without being burdensomely so, also serve several purposes: they give the best possible bibliography, explain terms and historical facts in the texts that are obscure, and present the opinions of expert critics and historians upon doubtful points. Twenty-five well chosen plates are useful illustrations to the texts: for example, a reproduction of Le Brun's "Expressions" accompanies his essay "Concerning Expression in General and in Particular," and the photograph of Greuze's "The Son's Punishment" clarifies Diderot's discussion of that painting. The table of contents and the index are of considerable value, and the translations, made with the assistance of distinguished art historians, are appropriately free and eminently readable.

BERNARD C. HEYL.

Beneath the Shadow. James Bertram. John Day. $3.50.

MR. BERTRAM'S story properly begins with the fall of Hong Kong on Christmas Day, 1941. He was captured there and spent the next four years in PW camps; the first two in China, the remainder at Omori prison near Tokyo, where he labored in the Tokyo railway yards and watched the fall of Japan from within. In 1946 he returned as adviser to the New Zealand representative of the Far Eastern Commission.

However, the author feels it necessary to explain his presence in Hong Kong, and to comment upon the Chinese war. As a result, the prologue to "Beneath The Shadow" becomes a maze of personal contacts and experiences, through which Mr. Bertram's main point shows but vaguely. He seemingly feels that China's war has become one between radical liberals and an entrenched dictatorship. Yet he also seemingly suffers the same reticence of which he accuses others toward exposing the situation.

In the main body of his story things pick up amazingly. His narrative style is delightful. Although terse, it contains deft touches of description and characterization that leave the reader with splendid images. Better, he has a sure understanding of the motivations behind the people of the Orient. He also seems to have, in common with some other ex-PW's, a pro-Japanese sentiment. As a result, his accounts of work in Tokyo during the war often take on a flavor of the best exploits of Owen Johnson's Tennessee Shad.

But this feeling also provides Mr. Bertram with something infinitely more valuable: a real understanding of the problem of Japan and her future. "In Japan . . . the human spirit is oppressed and confined; and, like all prisoners, it suffers neurosis and sickness." He fears that the occupation will not release this spirit, but only streamline Japanese economy and society in a typically American manner. For the problem of China he has no specific recommendations. For the problem of Japan his solution is a better understanding of her people and a sympathetic attitude towards them. Only in that way can we awaken their spirit for democracy, and, "In the long run it was the Japanese people who would have to build their new democracy, if a Japanese democracy was ever to be built."

JAMES O. FREDERICK.

Harp of a Thousand Strings. H. L. Davis. Morrow. $3.00.

THE "supple confusions" of history's gift—a phrase from Eliot here put to service—give thematic form to this structure deeply engaged in seeking harmonies. The characters in "Harp of a Thousand Strings" employ themselves through the agency of will in adding line to sequence; they do not achieve, they scarcely struggle for, pattern. They learn that pattern is not for them, that one cannot, ever, expect *quo* for one's *quid,* yet "in the end they can still count for much, for the stories of a land are cumulative assertions of what it is, its character, its people, its individuality, its being." And when land and humanity, each in its turn, have passed, "God will remain, in Whose hands all the stories will be gathered into one."

Mr. Davis has interlocking stories to tell, though they come together for no more ostensible purpose than do lines consorting on the same plane. What have three American adventurers, a Naval officer of quixotic honor, an articulate Indian, and an inarticulate young man of unreflecting action, to do with M. Tallien, sometime head of Republican France? Tallien, Carlyle's "red-gloomy Tallien," holds them for the fraction of an evening in Tripoli. He tells them the story of his public life; they pass into the night; they carry a part of the story, that symbolizing his greatest defeat, into their own destiny. A small American town, a settlement which does not know the story of its three founders, is the unlooked-for

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result of that shadowy evening. What does any of them get for it, what but "a deepening sense of life poured out lavishly, sometimes frantically, and waste and emptiness in return for it?"

It is hardly reasonable to ask what this story is "about." Surely it is not simply the story of the growth of the American West. Nor again, despite the fact that most of these pages recount with immediacy of sight and sound and sense Tallien's days of power in France, is this merely the story of that country's Revolution. Partly it is a parable on the uses of power, on the fact that chief of all things men use is other men. "I keep thinking," says the countess whom Tallien long ago rescued from the guillotine—she is speaking of him and of another unconscious pawn in her life—"they represent what it has cost to keep me alive." Each, then, represents, in varying ways, the cost it all has been to another.

For more than anything else, "Harp of a Thousand Strings" is what the novel was intended to be: a study of moral choices. Tallien's decision, with its gray mixture of motives, to rescue the countess was no final thing; it merely brought about other choices. When he is faced with what seems to him the most anarchic choice of all, when his enemy the young marquis elects death rather than escape and dishonor, Tallien must momentarily learn that right will is the chief harmony of order. Choice becomes a link with meditation; action adds a line to the pattern undiscerned and all but undiscernible.

"Harp of a Thousand Strings" is one thing more. It is prose of a rareness in our time. It is prose in contemplation, commentary. It is prose that has life around it and in it. RILEY HUGHES.

The History and Present State of Virginia. Robert Beverley, as edited by Louis B. Wright. North Carolina. $4.00.

BEVERLEY (d. 1732) was a planter, a brother-in-in-law of William Byrd of Westover, and author of the first history of Virginia by a native-born aristocrat, who was inspired to write his own survey of the Old Dominion after revising the faulty manuscropt of an unnamed compiler for John Oldmixon's "The British Empire in America." His book came out in 1705, was revised in 1722, and was reprinted in 1855. And now it is done over for the Institute of Early American History and Culture of Williamsburg, with an elaborate introduction and notes by Dr. Louis B. Wright, a skilled editor and recognized early Virginian and Elizabethan scholar, late of the Huntington Library and now director of the Folger Shakespearean Library in Washington. It makes a beautiful book, and Beverley's account remains a valuable study of the political, natural, and governmental history of Virginia.

A churchman of a sardonic view of the several governors, but not Berkeley or Andros, and of the worldly local parsons, Beverley was a royalist and a loyal Virginian, but not an uncritical or unrestrained writer. He was determined to protect the liberties of the ruling ascendancy, to encourage immigration of Huguenots, to discountenance the driving away of sectaries from the colony by mistaken restraints, to advance the colonial economy, to forward the best interests of his church and William and Mary College, and to minimize religious persecution. He wrote kindly of Baltimore: "that Noble Caecilius Calvert, a Roman Catholick, thought for the

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more quiet Exercise of his Religion to retire with his Family, into that new World. For this Purpose, he went to Virginia, to try how he liked the Place: But the people there looked upon him with an evil Eye, on account of his Religion, for which alone he sought this Retreat; and by their ill Treatment, discouraged him from settling in that Country." As for the Indians, Beverley declared that he did know them like Father Hennepin, but he did extol the redmen in his description of native life and favored intermarriage.

Withal, Beverley's history is easy and informative reading for an evening and invaluable for an atmosphere which later writers on Virginia fail to catch.

RICHARD J. PURCELL.

A House In Chicago. Olivia Howard Dunbar. Univ. of Chicago. $3.50.

THIS BOOK is a recollection of the far-flung literary friendships which the late Mrs. Harriet Moody maintained during the years just before and some time after the first World War, when Chicago was a center of awakening artistic energies. Mrs. Moody's address in Groveland Avenue became famous for the hospitality it promised writers; it was not so much a salon as it was a shelter, a place where Mrs. Moody's generosity provided the essentials for living, the chance to work, and, by some means or other, a future in the tangible shape of lecture engagements, jobs, and a suitable address or two in the network of her acquaintances. Rabindranath Tagore, Vachel Lindsay, Robert Frost, Mary and Padraic Colum, Glenway Wescott, and E. A. Robinson were among those who were encouraged to draw upon this very humane and resourceful hospitality.

Mrs. Dunbar's information is exact and close: she apparently has her material at first-hand. Sometimes her enthusiasm for her subject insists too much, and she writes with an affection which is a matter of personal rather than public interest. But the facts are here; and they are valuable both for what they tell of regional literary history and for the chapters they supply in the larger and more important histories still to be written.

HENRY RAGO.

One Fine Day. Mollie Panter-Downes. Little. $2.50.

FORTY MILES from London lives the gifted authoress of the letters from England that have appeared periodically in the *New Yorker* ever since the beginning of the war, and which have formed the most numerous items in the *New Yorker* war pieces, recently reprinted in book form.

"One Fine Day" is Mrs. Panter-Downes's first novel. It is the account of one midsummer twelve hours in the life of Laura Marshall, housewife. Her husband, Stephen, takes the usual commuters' train to town: her only child, Victoria, goes off to school, where she will be fed lunch, she is going on out to tea with the solid Watsons, well-to-do farmers, who have real cows and cream; thus Laura has nothing to do all day except shopping and housework (and little enough of the latter, since stout Mrs. Prout is come, to help with the beds, give a hand with the crocks, break the last of the flowered cups, shake the dusters, and spread on the floor polish) and fetch the errant Stuffy back from her brief honeymoon with the gypsy's dog. Mrs. Panter-Downes writes petit-point, with minute, loving attention, that magnifies every infinitesimal incident of Laura's day, seeing it as a microcosm not only of Laura's life, but of England's. She is a true artist, in that flawless, ladylike tradition of the Best Female British Authors, tinkling enchantingly down from the immortal Jane, via Cranford and Miss Mitford, transposing en route Virginia Wolf's minor chords into Mrs. Miniver's well-tempered patriotism. Soup of the soup of the soup the hare soup, said the Turkish Khoja, setting a dish of pure water before the friend of the friend of the friend of the friend who had brought him the hare, and Mrs. Panter-Downes's distillation is so rare, so faint, that only the most delicate, the most acute, astute palate will perceive the infinite variety of her exquisitely blended flavors, as in the best China tea, saying yes, of course, I can taste the oolong, the lapsang suchong, the pinch of green, the smoky tang of the Hu-Kwa. So the Vicar, crowned with wilting cucumber sandwiches, and old Voller; so young George, "springing like a god from the union of a woodman who could hardly read and a slut" and Laura herself, confronted with masterpieces of architecture, yet thinking merely, how much floor to sweep, how many stairs to run up and down, yet able to see herself, soup bowl in hand, patronizing the gypsy whilst envying him, and poor Stephen, who "all his life had expected to find doors opened if he rang, to wake to the soft rattle of curtain rings being drawn back, to find the fires bright and the coffee smoking hot every morning," and Mrs. Cranmer, accepting the move from her fifteenth century house to the tiny flat above the stables indifferently, shrewd as an old peasant in calculating the value of a cow: all are part of a mourning picture, worked in once-bright hair; clavichord clear as gnats above a June lily pond. The book's real value lies in its author's objectivity: it is a lament for the living, a dirge for the Lauras and Stephens that are the very selves of so much many of the English. Also it is a march, albeit a funeral march, for the tougher Mrs. Cranmers and Mrs. Prouts. There is no room for us, the "nice" characters seem to chirp, appearing and disappearing like the grin of an infinitely distinguished, remote Cheshire cat, already visible to the reader only in certain light. Only the earthy will survive: England will be reduced, indeed, already is reduced, again to the characters in Chaucer, to the animal in which the human soul is "continens et non contenta." Tinkle, tinkle, little bell: ringing for ci-devant early morning tea, for afternoon tea, the silver tray laden with Georgian creaming and Staffordshire cups. Here, rare, etiolated, is threnody, for a way of life that led once to the making of much good literature.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

Autobiography of a Cornishman. A. L. Rowse. Macmillan. $4.00.

AN ELIZABETHAN expert, and Fellow of All Souls, Oxford, A. L. Rowse was born the son of a poor Cornish workingman. Although this may not seem a super-extraordinary concatenation to American ears, Mr. Rowse feels it makes his story quite unique; and it must be remembered that before the creation of Secondary (High) Schools in 1900, no English working-class boy stood a chance of getting to Oxford or Cambridge, and even by 1943, according to Brogan, only 6.6 percent of Secondary School boys went on to college. Nor was it so easy for Rowse, head boy in his school, to gain his objective. Failing in his first tryout for a schol-

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arship to Exeter College, Oxford, he finally succeeded in winning a Cornish County scholarship for £60 and a Christ Church Scholarship for £80 and then to eke out the necessary £200 was forced to ask help from the Drapers Company in London. Very bitter is he against the "loathesome" economy campaign carried on by the Northcliffe and Rothermere papers which cut down scholarships all over the country.

Mr. Rowse is confident that by his writings he has done as much for Cornwall as any man living, but this particular book seems a very sour set of memories. A fat boy disinclined to sports, young Rowse heartily disliked all his "ignorant and uninteresting" relatives except for a more prosperous and genial Aunt and Uncle. He disliked his parents' lack of education; their tumbledown house and the little shop he had to help his Mother tend. He resented the family poverty, the want of sympathy and outward affection and found solace in his school and his parish church where he was soloist. He remained a devout Anglican while a choir boy, but discovered he was no longer dependent on the Christian "myth" when he began writing poetry, "not worse than the worst Wordsworth," but certainly too mediocre to inflict on his readers. Hardy, his idol, didn't brighten his introspective pessimism; Quiller-Couch was a happier influence.

This Oxford don has certainly no prejudice in favor of the working class. "The inverted snobbery of the Leftist intellectuals" invites his derision, and he endorses the Tory view of the peoples' "congealed stupidity, childishness, credulity and utter political foolery." On the other hand, he is equally scornful of the middle class, particularly their "gentleman" fetish "due to their harmless desire to blur the line of division between them and the upper class." He blames the Second War on middle-class fatuity and the "general mean-minded small propertied classes fearful for their particular security." The "intelligent" schoolboy, meanwhile, had the intuition for public affairs so wanting in his neighbors.

Not very noticeable in his own family, Mr. Rowse does pay some tribute to the big hearts of the working people and puts on record that his father, on returning from the coal mines in 1918, did pay 18 shillings for a set of Nelson's Encyclopaedia for his studious son, but he never seems to consider the sacrifice it must have meant to his old and semi-crippled mother and father to get along without his help during his higher education. Of course, the results have amply repaid them.

Admitting his nostalgia for the Church, Mr. Rowse draws the conclusion that, whereas he loved the ritual every bit as much as Newman, Newman "rationalized" his emotions and so came to believe what he wanted to believe. But Oxford plus Pareto taught Rowse to develop a philosophy in disjunction from his emotions. "It was a source of unhappiness, but," he adds, "I knew what to do." Poor Newman!

Whatever the sociological value of Rowse's detailed account of a working boy's struggle for education, the only net result to me from the Cornish side is to have robbed me of all my former desire to visit Cornwall.

E. V. R. WYATT.

General Education in the Humanities. Harold Baker Dunkel. American Council on Education. $3.50.

IF THE unsuspecting potential reader of "General Education in the Humanities" should conceive the

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notion that the book will provide a pat answer to the broad problem with which it deals, he should be forewarned that no such conclusion is aimed at or provided. The volume is one of four resulting from the five-year survey of general education by the American Council on Education, and is, for the most part, an elaborate compilation of data secured by testing and interviewing a large number of students in the twenty or twenty-five participating institutions, a group of colleges and universities varying widely in type, size, and location.

There is much that is commendable in this volume. For example, the general conception of the humanities adopted is that phrased by Ralph Barton Perry as those studies "which make man more man in the eulogistic sense of the word; which contribute to a 'good life' based on free and enlightened choice among values." And there is much said about this matter of values, a topic which many of our contemporary theorists are only too willing to avoid or ignore. But these and other good things are weighed down by an amazing conglomeration of statistical data and an infusion of jargon that make the book an extremely annoying one to read. To illustrate: I was much interested in learning something of students' beliefs about fiction, the subject of the fourth chapter. In order to realize this objective, however, I was obliged to wade through a verbose account of the Inventory of Satisfactions Found in Reading Fiction (the book is littered with such "inventories"; they supposedly reflect one's "pattern of enjoyment," et cetera). Then came the account of the check list. The list itself (three hundred titles) is admirable, but I fear it is impossible to be equally enthusiastic about the explanation of what makes a light novel "light," a standard novel "standard," and so on. Hoping finally, however, to arrive at some discussion of students' beliefs about fiction, I kept on and arrived at—Betty. Betty and the Inventory of Satisfactions; Betty's dislikes; Betty's experience with novels; Betty's possible needs. Then came Doris, a girl "who apart from values for escape, gets fewer than the average number of satisfactions in several categories." But why continue? This case history approach, coy to the point of nausea, is maddening. It is of course simply another example of our contemporary tendency to test and measure everything and to minimize any attempt at intellectual speculation. Perhaps some good will come of it.

THOMAS A. KIRBY.

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